

The conservation of cultural heritage in the face of climate catastrophe

January 7 2020, by David Bradley



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Cultural heritage can be destroyed. It can decay. Once it is gone, it is gone forever, sadly. Writing in the *International Journal of Global Warming*, Portuguese researchers discuss the potential impact of climate

change on cultural heritage and how we might lose artifacts as extreme weather has a worsening impact on our world.

Guilherme Coelho, Hugo Entradas Silva, and Fernando Henriques of the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa explain that museum pieces are subject to deterioration depending on the conditions in which they are stored, whether or not they are being exhibited or archived. The indoor climate is obviously more controllable than the outdoor, but nevertheless the increasing cost of air-conditioning, (de)humidification, and temperature control, are all likely to affect in a detrimental way how conservators look after their charges. In addition, sometimes the building themselves are the [cultural heritage](#).

The team has now modeled various climate change scenarios to see how [weather conditions](#) might affect a building such as Lisbon's historic church of Saint Christopher. They modeled conditions in Lisbon, but also applied likely conditions associated with Seville (Mediterranean climate), Prague and Oslo (Continental climate), as well as London (Oceanic climate). They not only consider the integrity of artifacts within but also visitor comfort. After all, what is the purpose of conserving cultural heritage without allowing people to appreciate it? Ultimately, climate change is unlikely to be of benefit to house artifacts in buildings that are themselves cultural artifacts.

More information: Guilherme B.A. Coelho et al. Impact of climate change on cultural heritage: a simulation study to assess the risks for conservation and thermal comfort, *International Journal of Global Warming* (2019). [DOI: 10.1504/IJGW.2019.104268](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJGW.2019.104268)

Provided by Inderscience

Citation: The conservation of cultural heritage in the face of climate catastrophe (2020, January 7) retrieved 24 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2020-01-cultural-heritage-climate-catastrophe.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.